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Manipulators At Work

Is local control of California's school districts too costly?

The pronouncements from several Sacramento offices recently appears to support the thought that many top state officials may think so.

Assemblyman Jesse M. Unruh, speaker of the Assembly, indicated he thought California's 1,585 districts were too many, and his Assembly Bill 46 introduced in the current sessions of the legislature would reduce that number by abolishing all districts except those serving chartered cities, and transfer them into countywide districts.

One of Torrance's Assembly representatives, Clayton Dills, who represents much of the city north of Torrance Boulevard, is a co-author of the Unruh Bill.

A second Assemblyman representing much of the western portion of Torrance, Charles E. Chapel, this week pledged to oppose the bill because "it is detrimental to public education and contains no redeeming features."

The move to break up California's community-directed school systems got strong backing from another office in Sacramento when the legislative analyst, A. Alan Post, unveiled a scheme cooked up by the Legislative Budget Committee staff.

This plan calls for a countywide tax for schools, reduction of school districts to 58 (one in each county), serious consideration to repeal of the state's guarantee of \$125 per student in basic aid to districts, and consider a slowdown in the textbook program.

While the Torrance Unified School District, established by charter and serving a chartered city, would be exempt from provisions of the Unruh bill, there is nothing to prevent such districts being forced to unify with area or regional districts as the Sacramento manipulators get the muscle to bring it about.

We consider it is fallacious to believe that consolidation of small operations into super operations lowers the cost. Education is not production line business but an individual, person-to-person experience and it needs close, locally controlled direction.

The consolidators, be they in Sacramento or elsewhere, should look elsewhere for their kicks, and leave the schools alone.

'Temporary' Bureaus

The virtually automatic manner in which temporary federal aid programs blossom into larger activities of a permanent character was never better demonstrated than in the governmental assistance to libraries program.

Iowa's Congressman H. R. Gross pointed out the history of the program recently, stating that Congress in 1956 approved expenditures of about \$7 million annually for five years for the improvement of library services in the rural areas through the use of bookmobiles.

The idea, according to the Iowa Republican, was to encourage communities to institute or carry on their own programs after the federal government had withdrawn. In 1960, however, the program was extended—again on a temporary basis.

Recently, instead of ending the program, a New Library Services Bill was passed by Congress which calls for a 600 per cent increase in funds.

The Congressman pointed out that sponsors of the new program no longer talk about it being a temporary measure. The new project will provide for a vast expansion of the existing program and will open the door to all cities instead of limiting it to communities of 10,000 or less where the need is greatest. In addition, a provision for construction of libraries under the federal program is included for the first time.

Nothing is temporary in Washington.

Opinions of Others

Add Hazleton, Pa., to the list of unsung heroic communities.

Along with many other localities whose exploits in overcoming economic adversity without outside aid have gone virtually unacknowledged, Hazleton has conclusively proved that self-help—rather than Washington gold—provides the soundest means of achieving economic rehabilitation.

Eight years ago Hazleton was dealt a cruel blow when a hurricane flooded its coal mines, knocking most of them out of commission permanently and throwing half of its work force out of jobs. Instead of bemoaning its fate and appealing for federal assistance, the community's 40,000 residents rolled up their sleeves and plunged into an intensive boot-strap recovery program.

Under the vigorous leadership of the Greater Hazleton Chamber of Commerce an organization was formed with the appropriate title of "CAN DO Corporation" to entice new industrial enterprises to locate in Hazleton. The funds to support offers of 100 per cent financing of new plants were raised locally through contributions by utilities, banks, stores and individuals and through the sale of bonds.

The effort paid off, handsomely. Today, Hazleton has 14 new manufacturing companies and 4,000 new jobs have been created, reducing the unemployment toll to a respectable 8 per cent.

It is too bad that the successes of communities like Hazleton are ignored by federal planners. The latter seem bent only on extravagant spending of taxpayers' funds in trouble spots rather than recommending the tried-and-true self-help formulas for solution of economic ills. —Industrial Press Service.

Everybody Really Loves Us



ROYCE BRIER

Is Johnson Just Reacting, Not Solving Daily Crises?

A trend of Washington comment on President Johnson's three months in office, is that the President has moved with great energy to give his Administration momentum and a sense of accomplishment.

Most observers think he overworks himself, keeping an 18-hour day. He sees everybody, moves from meeting to meeting with little rest.

He lands on the front page daily with something new. He pushes congressmen on the tax cut and civil rights. He cuts budgets, attacks waste, pursues reform of our social and economic institutions. He plans a broad assault on poverty, and would aid other unfortunates. Now he puts a "consumer education" program before Congress.

All this is heartening enough, even when cynics remind us he is looking to Nov. 4. A moving nation accumulates fewer troubles than a do-nothing nation, typified by the Harding-Coolidge era.

So, Mr. Johnson is on top

of our domestic problem, but some observers are not so sure he is on top of our foreign problem.

A raw impression would be that President Kennedy about divided his time between foreign and domestic affairs. He kept some leisure and seclusion to think about foreign affairs. He built a big team of experts to help him do his thinking. In many cases, though not all, he perceived a crisis developing and was ready for it at peak.

Mr. Johnson pleaded with the Kennedy team to help him for a time, and it did, but as was inevitable, it is now disintegrating, and replacements are scarce. Washington experts say that in consequence the President is repeatedly being taken by surprise as world trouble spots come to a boil.

Surely Mr. Johnson, who seeks to create a "new image" of world leadership, cannot think that the same old promises and attitudes in the mercurial South Vietnam

mess will suffice for long. Moreover, the President publicly misread General de Gaulle's program for Vietnam neutralization, nor does he seem to comprehend the General's purpose in the Red China affair.

Surely there is supreme irony in flying American refugees out of Cyprus when our embassy was bombed, then planning to put American soldiers into that quicksand. In Ghana, another embassy bombing and a vicious attack by a raging dictator, results only in returning our ambassador for "consultation." In Panama we never discovered on our own what happened, and we are going nowhere in Geneva and Malaysia.

The question is: has Mr. Johnson allotted himself the time to think through these crises? For merely to react to a crisis is not to get on top of it, or even start solving it. And the state of the international world, too, will be of some importance, come November.

James Dorias

Groups Forming to Fight New Threats to Redwoods

Without doubt, California's most priceless scenic assets are the remaining groves of age-old redwoods that only a few short decades ago nearly blanketed the state's north coast.

The enclaves of forest giants that have been preserved for public enjoyment were saved from the woodman's axe by contributions, large and small, from conservationists, not just in California but throughout the country, under the leadership of the Save-the-Redwoods League. In recent years, these private contributions have been matched by state funds.

But today, the trees that were thought to have been saved for all time are threatened with destruction from another source—the State of California's Division of Highways, whose credo appears to be that nothing on earth is more important than freeways, and that all freeways must be built in a straight line—even if the line happens to run through the Taj Mahal.

Already, countless giants have been uprooted to build a typically slash and fill, scar-tissue high speed roadway that parallels and crisscrosses the old, scenic Avenue of the Giants winding through the cathedral-like groves along the South Fork of the Eel River in southern Humboldt County.

The need for a modern highway in the area could have been met by constructing it a short distance to the east above the redwood belt. Such a route might have meant that the drive from Garberville to Scotia would have taken five minutes longer.

Cuff Notes

The luck of the Irish is said to have helped many a woman catch her man . . . Leap year proposal privileges for women originated in Ireland as an official tradition in the fifth century when legislation introduced by St. Patrick was passed . . . The tradition spread to other European countries which also gave it legal sanction . . . In the thirteenth century France and Scotland made the observance of leap year a law.

Italy legalized the tradition in the 15th century shortly before Columbus sailed for America . . . In England leap year had become part of common law by 1600 when legal books defined it as the privilege "ye ladies have of making love to ye men, which they doe either by wordes or looks, as to them seemeth proper."

A more important objection, apparently, from the State's standpoint, was that negotiations and condemnations for the right-of-way would have been more expensive and time-consuming than cutting through forest land already owned by the state.

On the drawing boards is an already adopted freeway route that would massacre its way through the 5,000 acre National Tribute Grove in Jedediah Smith Redwoods State Park—again a forest preserve that was given to the State of California by private donations from conservationists who never dreamed the state would betray their trust.

Prairie Creek State Park and other groves of matchless beauty also are threatened.

The high-handed tactics of the State Division of Highways, however, are beginning to meet with strenuous objections. A beautifully illustrated and well-written book, "The Last Redwoods," just published by the Sierra Club, documenting this latest threat to an irreplaceable scenic resource, is receiving a well deserved public response.

And a new organization, the Conservation Law Society of America, has been formed, with a grant from the Save-the-Redwoods League, to prepare for possible legal action against the Division of Highways freeway programs.

AFTER HOURS By John Morley

All-Arab Drive a Threat To Nasser in Middle East

BAGHDAD, IRAQ — This report began in Istanbul as we returned to the Middle East from Black Sea Russia, Rumania and Bulgaria. Our route followed the railroad destroyed by Lawrence of Arabia in World War I, from Damascus to Medina, some 450 miles to the south through Jordan, after covering critical Iraq and Syria . . . and later Lebanon and Jerusalem, Jordan.

After the bloodshed in November, Iraq is quiet—except for a midnight curfew.

My trip to Babylon was interrupted several times by machinegun-toting sentries and armored cars, which stop and search every car and every passenger or pedestrian.

Baghdad is in a stage of orderly seige. Some 50,000 Iraqi troops, aided by 6,000 Syrians are trying to halt the Kurd rebels in their drive north of the Mosul oilfields, after capturing the Kurd capital of Barzan.

In today's shifting political sands of the Middle East, there has emerged a heretofore little known clandestine movement known as the Renaissance party (Baath). It represents a new dynamic force that has successfully challenged Egypt's Nasser for the leadership of the entire Arab world.

The avowed aim of the united Iraq and Syrian Baathists is to create an all-Arab force with the central power in Baghdad instead of Cairo or Algiers.

The power struggle is intense both within and outside the Baath party, as to the speed the unification plans are to be pursued. It is this inter-party struggle that has kept Baghdad under a curfew, while the army is fighting the Kurds in the North and guarding the ominous borders to the South.

Iraq today is under the control of the Baath Central committee, which includes representatives of Jordan, Lebanon, Kuwait, as well as Iraq and Syria . . . and directed by Baath Secretary-general Michel Aflak, the real power and co-founder of the Baath, along with Syrian Premier Salah Bitar.

The struggle in the capital of Iraq has been between Vice-premier Ali Saadi, of the radical left, and Foreign Minister Talib Shabib, who today successfully stopped the Saadi faction from socialization of the entire Iraqi economy by arresting Saadi and his cabinet and exiling them to Europe under threat of death.

But it was not a clear-cut victory for the moderates. For as soon as the Saadi supporters in the national guard and labor unions heard of the coup, they demonstrated in the streets and forced the creation of a neutral board to rule Iraq until the new elections in March . . . unless more political heads get chopped off in the meantime.

"Baath" is described as an organization fanatically Pan-Arabist reformist and progressive . . . but right of liberal Nasser.

So is the man who founded it . . . Michel Aflak, secretary-general of the Baath Central committee and a Syrian intellectual. Aflak is the brains and moving force of the entire Baathist movement in the Middle East, controlled from Damascus.

"I dreamed about Baath," he relates, "some 20 years ago while teaching political science in Syrian schools, then under the domination of France. Some say our original group was over educated, underpaid, and under employed. But our moving force was Pan-Arabia and dignity. "After the Arab defeat by Israel in 1948, we realized the weak and lazy Arab structure was responsible for the humiliation and disaster. It was the disorganization of 40

million Arabs that brought their defeat by one million Jews."

From about 1,000 Baathists in 1948, Aflak has rallied around him some 60,000 selected followers dedicated to the cause of Pan-Arabia. Their dedication has defeated all opposition including that of Egypt's Nasser, who failed in his attempt to subordinate Baath to his leadership.

In 1956 Aflak joined Nasser in a union of Egypt and Syria. But their rival ambitions clashed and Syria broke the pact in 1961. Nasser ordered several insurrections against Baath in both Syria and Iraq, which failed.

After the execution of Communist-leaning dictator Kassem in Baghdad last March, the Baathists have consolidated their power to become the dominant force in the Arab world.

Most businessmen we talked to in the Middle East de-

scribe Baath, as fanatical and unrealistic. Their constant political revolts are bad for business and tourism.

The Arab Christians fear further submersion in an already overwhelming Arab world. The Moslem Kurds want no part of the Baathist Arabs, and are now fighting for a separate Kurd state in northern Iraq.

Baath is violently anti-Communist. The murder of dictator Kassem was the result of his pro-Communist policies in Iraq. Baath is against Western dominance of any kind and recently accepted \$50 million U.S. aid with no strings attached.

It rules with the firing squad inside its domain . . . and with equal ruthlessness toward the outside world. It has the support of both the Syrian and Iraq armies, which means it has what it takes to call anybody's bluff, from any quarter, in the changing Middle East.

Our Man Hoppe

Movie Plot's A Little Thick

Art Hoppe

We certainly showed that rat, Mr. Castro, a thing or two. As you know, he cut the water to our Guantanamo Naval Base down to a trickle. But we struck back fiercely by taking the pledge never ever to touch another drop of that Cuban water. And we turned off our end of the pipe so none would sneak in.

Moreover, we dispatched tankers filled with pure, clean, 100 per cent American water to our drying outpost. Plus a whole desalinization plant to make real American water right on the spot.

Oh, how Mr. Castro writhed at these body blows. He even claimed our Admiral Bulkeley was still secretly siphoning water out of the pipes. "Hogwash!" cried the Admiral in the finest tradition of military outrage. And in public ceremonies he dug up our pipes and sawed them in half.

What a victory! Mr. Castro turns a valve and we spend umpteen million dollars. Which really shows him how rich and powerful we are. And all I want from the whole episode is the film rights. It'll make a great war movie for the Late Late Show. With a little adaptation.

(SCENE: Headquarters of Admiral John Wayne Payne. He is sitting at his desk, sipping powdered water from a fork, when his aide, Commander Robert Montgomery Taylor, enters, looking worried.)

Admiral: We'll show that rat.
Aide: Sir, we just heard it on the radio. That rat says our Naval Base here is on Cuban soil.

Admiral: Hogswill!
Aide: No sir, we checked. He's right. We just have a lease. And it really is Cuban soil.

Admiral: Cuban soil! Bob, I will not have our American boys supported by Cuban soil. You know what Washington would want in a case like this. Every man in his shovel. We'll show that rat.

(Montage of sweating sailors and Marines grimly shoveling Cuban soil into the sea. All day, all night. At last, there is no room to stand. Only by one, the thin line of shovelers disappears beneath the sea.)

Aide: We can't hold out much longer, sir.
Admiral: We'll show that rat.

Aide: Now it's just you and I left, sir.
Admiral: Keep digging, Bob. We'll show that rat.

Aide: Wait, sir. We're saved. Look!
(A vast armada of landing ships steams around the point. Their bows open to discharge millions of tons of earth. The Admiral and the aide, both on tiptoes with chins held high, cheer.)

Admiral: You know what that is, Bob? That's pure clean, 100 per cent American soil! We sure showed that rat.

Well, you may say the plot's a little thick. Even for a war movie. But that just shows you haven't been keeping up on the way we react lately to Communist provocations.

And now the only thing worrying me is that Mr. Castro, in a flight of oratorical fancy, will note how our boys at Guantanamo are "breathing the very air of Cuba." Oh, we'll never get enough pure, 100 per cent American oxygen there in time.

Morning Report:

Boy, oh boy, the country surely is going to the dogs. I can't remember when things were so bad since the last election year in 1960.

The Government is facing bankruptcy, inflation, and deflation. The farmers are in desperate straits and business is about to collapse. Also facing a moral disintegration, sparked by an outmoded hi-fi phonograph.

All this I can stand, as I did in previous campaigns. But abroad, wow! We are threatened by Panama, Cuba, and Ghana. It's encirclement and our missiles are no good. Who can wait until November to vote? Head for the hills today.

Abe Mellinkoff

Quote

"Too many people feel they are absolutely right, when it is only their prejudices which are showing." — Tom Kendall, Walnut Creek.